

TOP SECRET SENSITIVE EYES ONLY

DIA review
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FM THE SITUATION ROOM//TOHAK 33//

TO GOMPERT FOR THE SECRETARY

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T O P S E C R E T SENSITIVE EYES ONLY CONTAINS CODEWORD WH50633

TOHAK 33

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE
INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

TO: DAVE GOMPERT FOR HENRY A. KISSINGER
FROM: BRENT SCOWCROFT

GENERAL GRAHAM, DIRECTOR OF DIA, HAS ASKED THAT THE INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT ON VIETNAM CONTAINED IN TOHAK-16 BE PASSED TO GENERAL WEYAND, IN ADDITION TO HIS PERSONAL COMMENT ON THE ASSESSMENT WHICH IS PROVIDED BELOW.

BEGIN TEXT:

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
THE ACTING CHAIRMAN, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
SUBJECT: LARGE SCALE NVA MILITARY ACTION IN MR'S III AND IV (U)

1. (S) INTELLIGENCE ANALYSTS ALL OVER TOWN ARE PREDICTING AN OVERWHELMING NVA ASSAULT AGAINST SAIGON WITHIN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE. THIS ASSESSMENT IS BASED ON THE CURRENT OBVIOUS MILITARY SUPERIORITY OF THE NVA, THE HEAVY SVN LOSSES WHICH HAVE OCCURRED IN MR I AND MR II, AND THE DETERIORATING MORALE IN THE SOUTH. THIS ASSESSMENT IS BASICALLY A CAPABILITIES ASSESSMENT AND CANNOT BE FAULTED ON THOSE GROUNDS. HOWEVER, THIS ASSESSMENT ALSO ASSUMES AN INTENT BY THE NVA TO PUSH ITS MILITARY ADVANTAGE TO THE UTMOST NOW.

2. (S) EVIDENCE IS ACCUMULATING WHICH LEADS ME TO BELIEVE THAT THE INTENTIONS PART OF THIS ASSESSMENT IS WRONG. HAD THE NVA INTENT BEEN TO QUICKLY APPLY A COUP DE GRACE TO SAIGON, THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN AN ATTACK BY THE FORCES THAT HAD PRESSED IN ON TAY NINH, REINFORCED BY THE NEWLY ARRIVED 341ST DIVISION. (MY PREVIOUS PREDICTIONS THAT THE GVN COULD PROBABLY HOLD TAY NINH WERE MADE WITHOUT THE EVIDENCE OF THE PRESENCE OF THE 341ST DIVISION.) THE NVA DID NOT ATTACK TAY NINH AND IN FACT HAVE REMOVED ALL PRESSURE ON THAT CITY EXCEPT FOR A FEW LOCAL UNITS AGAINST WHICH ARVN CAN PROBABLY DEFEND HANDILY. THE THIRD AND FIFTH DIVISIONS HAVE BEEN DEPLOYED TO IV CORPS. HEADQUARTERS 341ST HAS REMAINED IN PHUOC LONG WHILE ONE REGIMENT HAS MOVED AWAY FROM TAY NINH TOWARDS XUAN LOC. FURTHER, WE HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO EVIDENCE THAT ANY OF THE

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DIVISIONS IN MR I AND II ARE MOVING AGAINST MR III, AND WITH THE EXCEPTION OF ONE DIVISION OF ANTI-AIRCRAFT ARTILLERY, WE HAVE ONLY A SUPPOSITION THAT THE NEWLY COMMITTED RESERVE DIVISIONS FROM NORTH VIETNAM ARE INTENDED FOR USE IN III AND IV CORPS.

3. (S) THERE IS A STEADY TATTOO OF PROPAGANDA FROM THE COMMUNIST SIDE ABOUT NEGOTIATIONS, AMNESTY, SWEETNESS AND LIGHT IN GENERAL. THE PRG HAS EVEN OFFERED TO NEGOTIATE WITH THIEU AS "A MAGNANIMOUS GESTURE." IN DA NANG THE NVA FLIES THE FLAG OF THE AN QUANG BUDDHISTS ABOVE THAT OF THE VC AND, BELIEVE IT OR NOT, THE RVN FLAG.

4. (S) ALL THIS POINTS TO A COMMUNIST DECISION TO TRY TO TAKE III AND IV CORPS WITHOUT A MASSIVE INVASION. THIS IS EMINENTLY SENSIBLE. THEY ARE MUCH BETTER OFF TAKING OVER THE SOUTH WITH THE PEASANTS STILL IN THEIR RICE PADDIES AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT STILL INTACT. FURTHER, THE POLITICAL ADVANTAGE OF SOUTH VIETNAM'S SURRENDER WITHOUT FIGHT WOULD BE ENORMOUS. AMONG OTHER POLITICAL ADVANTAGES WOULD BE THE JUSTIFICATION OF THEIR CONTENTION THAT WITHOUT THE "THIEU CLIQUE" THE SOUTHERN BRETHREN WOULD HAVE JOINED HANOI A LONG TIME AGO, AND AN "UPRISING" FOLLOWED BY SURRENDER OF THE SOUTH LESSENS THE ONUS OF BLATANT NORTH VIETNAMESE VIOLATION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT.

5. (S) THIS ANALYSIS DOES NOT SUGGEST HOPE FOR SOUTH VIETNAM. FROM THE POLITICAL POINT OF VIEW AT LEAST, IT IS A GLOOMIER PREDICTION THAN THE MILITARY ASSAULT SCENARIO FAVORED BY ANALYSTS ALL OVER TOWN, INCLUDING MY OWN.

6. (S) THE MILITARY PRESSURE FROM UNITS ALREADY IN III AND IV CORPS WILL CONTINUE IN ANY CASE, AND I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL WEEKS COMMUNIST UNITS WILL POSITION THEMSELVES FOR A FINAL ATTACK ON THE REMAINDER OF SOUTH VIETNAM SHOULD THE POLITICAL GAMBIT FAIL.

END TEXT.

WARM REGARDS.

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